Central excise on synthetic waste

1048. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that indigenous waste of acrylic fibre and polyester fibre falling under Central Excise tariff item No. 5503.19 is only Rs. 1.88 per kg. and Rs. 5/- per kg. or 50 per cent respectively; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a glaring discrimination of imposing duty of 550 per cent on imported synthetic waste. which is quite contrary to the announcement made by him on T.V. after presentation of the last budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The basic excise duty on waste of acrylic fibre is Rs. 1.88 per kg and that on waste of polyester fibre is Rs. 5 per kg. or 50 per cent *ad-valorem* whichever is less.

(b) The import duty on synthetic waste has been kept at 150 per cent *ad-valorem* Rs. 30 per kg. (basic duly + auxiliary duty) mainly as an anti-avoidance measure in order to discourage import of good quality fibre in the guise of waste.

The Finance Ministry while presenting the Budget for the year 1991-92, had announced in the Parliament that it was proposed to reduce the *ad-valorem* rate of basic plus auxillary duties of customs to a maximum of 150 per cent where it was more than that rate, thereby eliminating the tariff peaks above 150 per cent.

This statement of the Finance Minister was regarding reduction of *ad-valorem* duties alone and as such the *ad-vlorem* component of import duty on synthetic waste was brought down to 150 per cent without any change in the specific component of dutv.

Schemes for re-investment of Indira Vikas Patras

1049. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN. Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number and value of Indira Vikas Patras which matured on November 19, 1991;

(b) whether Government have worked out a re-investment scheme for these Indira Vikas Patras; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Under the existing system of accounting the accounts are compiled and tendered on a monthly basis and not on a day today basis.

(b) and (c) All small savings instruments including Indira Vikas Patras are available on tap throughout the year in which the maturity proceeds can be reinvested.

National Banks in rural areas of Tamil Nadu

1050. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Nationalised banks branches in rural areas of Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government propose to open some more branches in rural areas of that state during current year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) As at the end of June, 1991, 1402 branches of Public Sector Banks were functioning in rural areas of Tamil Nadu.

(b) and (c) Under the extant policy of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for opening of branches in rural areas, the list of identified centres with necessary particu-

lars in each district has to be given to the lead bank of that district. The Lead Bank after consolidating the lists received from all banks submits it to the District Collector for recommendations and onward transmission to RBI through the concerned State Government. Under the Branch Licensing Policy (1990—95), opening of branches of Public Sector Banks is a continuous process and hence it is not possible to project the number of branches that will be opened in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu during the current year.

1051. [*Transferred to the 9th December* 1991]

World Bank advice against soft options

1052.SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank had given any advice against soft options during Aid India Consortium meet at Paris; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) In the 1990-91 country Economic Memorandum (prepared by the World Bank), the World Bank has observed, "India no longer has soft options. Trade-offs between cutting expenditure and raising taxes and between restraining defence expenditures and solwing spending on social programs and/or infrastructural investment will require hard choices. India's pleadge to give "human face'" to adjustment and reform offers a unique challenge to donors. If India is prepared to follow through on the hard choices, the donor community should be prepared to strengthen its support significantly". The Country Economic Memorandum is prepared by the World Bank for facilititating consultation at Aid India consortium meetings.

Uniform sales tax on Commodities

1053. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a policy sales tax on commodities are being made uniform; and

(b) whether the list of declared goods under Fourth schedule will be expanded to include Jaggery, Chillies, tea powder, kerosene, coconut oil, arecanut, cement, medicines, soaps, animal feeds, edible oils and cereals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Sales-tax is a State subject under the Constitution. Therefore, policy is decided by the respective States. In the Chief Ministers' Conference held in February, 1989 it was decided that the States and Union Territories would adopt the minimum floor level rates in respect of the 29 identified items recommended by the Committee of the Sales-Tax Commissioners.

(b) There is no proopsal to expand the list of declared goods.

Fraud cases in UCO Bank Chandigarh

1054. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report appearing in the Tribune of September 26, 1991, captioned "Crores missing from Bank" in relation to various frauds and embezzlement of the UCO Bank (Sector 17B) Chandigarh Branch;

(b) if so, whether any inquiries have been conducted into the affairs of this bank;

(c) the number of frauds and embezzlement cases detected; and

(d) the details of action taken thereon?